

*By the same Author*

INDIAN STATES AND  
THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

GULAB SINGH  
FOUNDER OF KASHMIR

FEDERAL INDIA  
(WITH MR K. N. BHAKSHI)

# THE NEW EMPIRE

*Letters to a Conservative  
Member of Parliament  
On the future of  
England and India*

by

K. M. PANIKKAR

FOREIGN MINISTER OF PATIALA



MARTIN HOPKINSON LTD

23 SOHO SQUARE LONDON

1934

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# I

MY DEAR FRIEND,

LAST summer in England, I had occasion to discuss with you cursorily my views of the future relationship of my country with yours, and you were pleased to say that an elaboration of those views would be of interest to you and perhaps also to the British public. Naturally enough, people in England have, of recent years, heard a great deal of what Indians desire for their country in the way of autonomy and freedom. They have associated the national movement with the boycott of British goods, with terrorism, with civil disobedience and mass movements based on xenophobia. Nor is it a matter of surprise that the man-in-the-street, as you call him, should equate the Indian movement with the more objectionable aspects of it. He sees the Lancashire spindles lying idle: he hears of British officers being bombed or shot in out-of-the-way villages.

He is flooded with propaganda about fakirs walking up the steps of the Viceroy's house and of a weak and vacillating government yielding to the clamour of anti-British politicians and abdicating their responsibility in India. Day in and day out, the croakings of retired and disgruntled civilians reach him about the breakdown of administration in India, and how the noble edifice which they and their predecessors had helped to rear is being dismantled. No wonder that he is bewildered and, if he is by tradition and training inclined to hold fast to his faith in the Empire, alarmed about the future of his country and of India.

Are we not, both Englishmen and Indians, however, forgetting, in the din and tumult of our controversy, to inquire into the essentials of the problem? Does an ordinary Englishman ask 'What is it that the Indians want in India? What is their view of the future relationship between Britain and India? Is it of such a nature that it can be reconciled with the true interests of Britain?' Again, how many Indians ask 'What is it that Britain visualizes as the future of India?

Can her imperial policy be reconciled with the desire of India for freedom, social progress and economic development?" The ordinary Indian or the thinking Englishman faced with such questions will say that India's ideal should be to achieve, and Britain's objective, to raise India to, the status of a Dominion.

This is to my mind a most unsatisfactory answer. Dominion status is only a constitutional relationship. It does not touch the vital aspects of policy with which both Britain and India are most deeply concerned. The status of a Dominion India undoubtedly desires and is entitled to, but that only shifts the solution of the problem to a different plane. The questions of political association of the British and Indian communities in *India*, of their economic collaboration in the development of India, and the bases of permanent social and cultural relationship are left untouched. These problems did not arise in any marked degree in the Dominions of Canada, Australia, or even South Africa, because in civilization and economic organization and racial relationship, the Dominions

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and the mother country did not materially differ

What I am trying to do in the following letters is to discuss the bases of the true relationship in which Britain and India should stand to each other in fact, to work out the outlines of an Indo-British Commonwealth in India, in which will be found reconciliation, the desire of India for unfettered national development and the interests of Britain for a wider community on which to shape her economic and political life

Two things stand out clear for even the most casual observer to see, and these neither India nor England can afford to forget. The Indian Nationalists cannot and should not forget that Great Britain has been associated with the life of India for 150 years and, inevitably, the economic, social and political structure now prevailing in India is the result of collaboration between Indians and Britishers during that period, that the exclusion of British influence would mean the breakdown not only of the political unity of India, but of the economic structure, on which the life of India depends, that future

progress can only be in association with Britain and not against her. Nor is it possible for Indians to forget that world conditions have so altered that a militarily weak country cannot stand unaided in a world of industrialism depending on raw materials and backed by destructive weapons. The revolution in transport has made size and distance ineffective weapons against conquest, as recent events in China have proved.

It is equally necessary for England to remember that though Indians may not be able to achieve freedom against Britain's might, they can ruin her trade, weaken her position in the world and make it impossible for her to govern in India peacefully, which is not only her desire but her *predominant interest*. The days when India could be terrorized or held down by force are indeed over. The unity of India which England has achieved through modern transport, a common political language and economic integration, has created a gulf between the days of Wellesley, Dalhousie, or even Lawrence and our own days. A just solution has therefore to be found, and that is why I

consider that the present negotiations are crucial for India and England

Why I address these letters to you, a Conservative, can easily be explained. The Conservatives are by the accusation of their enemies, as well as by their own confession, an imperialist party. It is true that the word 'imperialism' has undesirable associations to all subject peoples, as embodying the spirit of 'the White Man's burden' and the consequent inferiority of other races, of colonial exploitation, of arrogant jingoism. We in India know only too well this aspect of imperial theory. But after a close study of tendencies in British politics, I am convinced that this is only one aspect of imperialism. Besides, what I desire to bring to your notice is but a reinterpretation of imperial policy, and naturally no party is more interested in it than a genuinely imperialist party. A reinterpretation of imperialism in the light of modern developments in the economic and political sphere is indeed what Britain, India and the Empire needs. Here in principle I am in agreement with Lord Beaverbrook, though with his scheme of Empire Free Trade I

cannot wholly agree This aspect of imperial policy, as it affects India, I shall with your permission discuss later.

•Naturally, therefore, I can best lay my views before a genuine Conservative, not in the narrow sense of party divisions, but in the sense of one standing for the better adjustment of imperial relations, based on mutual interest India has had a sufficiency of maudlin sentimentalism doled out to her about her right to be free and Britain's desire to see her autonomous and progressive The Little England Liberalism, reared in free trade, non-Conformity and export of capital, naturally failed when it came into contact with the complicated problems of India; while the Labour Party, based on functional interests, leavened by a mildly socialist creed, could neither appreciate nor understand the wider aspects of economic and other relationships in which India stands to Britain Now you know why I address myself to you as a Conservative and an imperialist. for in essence the views I have to put forward are themselves imperialist in the real sense of the word

Those views, constituting the 'thesis' of these letters, can be briefly stated here. To my mind it is obvious that the relationship between India and Britain in the future is likely to be much more intimate, comprehensive and closely interwoven with the life of both countries than that between Britain and her Dominions. This may sound rather strange, astonishing and paradoxical, but even a cursory examination will prove it to be true. Some of the reasons for this conclusion may be alluded to here. England needs the Dominions less than she needs India; equally India needs England much more than do the Dominions. For England India's reserved markets are essential for prosperity, nay, even stability of economic life. India is England's largest single customer. The Indian market is inexhaustible, and if it is wiped out or even contracts materially, the whole economic organization of England will be most seriously affected.

In fact, much of the agitation against Indian self-government has been worked up on this admitted fact, and the possibility of a national government of India closing the

market to Britain. As Mr. Winston Churchill, speaking at Epping on July 8, 1933, has said:

“India is vital to the well-being of Britain, and I cannot help feeling very anxious when I see forces from which our population is largely supported, being gradually diminished. Foreign investments are slowly shrinking and shipping is at a low ebb. If to these we add the loss of India in one form or another, then problems will arise here incomparably more grave than any we have known. You will have a surplus population here which it may be beyond the Government to provide for effectively.

Again, speaking at the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, he said:

At the very centre of this struggle would be the trade of Lancashire. The new Indian Parliaments would attract British trade by a dozen means. They would give their contracts to foreign nations out of spite to us. They would harass British firms trading in India in a score of ways. The cotton trade, upon the existence of which Lancashire wage-earners and employers depended, would under the White Paper become a mere pawn in a struggle for more power. The present generation might live to

see a very great restriction of our trade with the Far East. Could it now afford to jeopardize our trade with India?

The need of India for England is indeed no less. For development in every sphere of her life, economic, political, social and cultural, India needs British co-operation and support. Without Britain defending her frontiers, her national policy, however progressive, must inevitably fail. Without British capital, technical help and direction in the more complicated problems of organization, her new national life cannot go on for any length of time. These are patent facts which no one is likely to deny and it requires no elaboration to establish them.

The facts are otherwise with regard to the Dominions. Their nationalism is more integral, if one may say so, more self-dependent than that of India. Their defence, except perhaps in the case of Australia, is not dependent on Britain. Their economic life is inclined to be more and more exclusive. Great Britain also is less dependent on them. As markets for British goods, the Dominions compared to India are indeed insignificant.

The industrial life of Canada is increasingly dependent on the United States, while Australia will in course of time become more and more exclusive. These facts came as a surprise to most Englishmen during the negotiations at Ottawa, when Australia and Canada were found to be unwilling to give preference to British goods except at a very high price

If the interdependence of England and India is fundamental and vital to the growth of both, it is obvious that the establishment of a permanent relationship on an equitable basis is an urgent necessity for the future. India has long ago realized that England's weakness is *not India's strength*; on the contrary, England's *external* strength, that is, her strength as a world Empire as apart from her position in India, is essential to India's peaceful development. What England has to realize—and which she is beginning to realize—is that England's strength depends on a contented self-governing India which recognizes her identity of world-interest with Britain

Imagine for one moment what England's



external weakness would mean for India. Her long and open coast line would be open to the attacks of predatory naval powers. Her land frontier, which is made safe from attack only by ceaseless vigilance, would become equally vulnerable. No one in India, unless he is a madman or a half wit, could therefore desire the weakening of Britain's might as against the rest of the world. Every thinking Indian is naturally an imperialist, so far as the naval and military power of England is concerned.

You may well ask. Assuming all this to be true, and granting that the permanent interests of Britain and India are identical, how is it that Indian Nationalism as represented by the Congress, has displayed such unfriendliness to English people and the nationalist agitation has taken more or less an anti British form? The answer should indeed be obvious. The present political position in India is intolerable from the Indian point of view. I do not desire to go into that question, but there can be no denying that the actual political facts in India to-day are that the British are the rulers and Indians

the ruled. The stigma of racial, political and social inferiority attaches to every Indian, from the highest and most exalted ruler to the lowest peasant. No Indian of any self-respect could accept that position, and if India has revolted, it is not against England but against the status to which she is confined. No Indian—least of all Mahatma Gandhi—harbours rancour against England. Every Indian worth his salt feels strongly the subordination of his countrymen, and if the national movement has in some aspects apparently adopted an anti-British attitude, the explanation is to be found in the same psychology which converts the opponents of Indian self-government into anti-Indians and confirmed believers in racial superiority.

The baneful effects of the irregular relationship in which India now stands, which England can no longer maintain and India will no longer accept, are indeed manifest to all. The greatest of those effects is that, if the relationship is not solemnly regularized in the meantime, anti-British feeling may develop into an historical tradition, much as it did in Ireland in the nineteenth century. In fact,

unless India attains the status and freedom which she desires within her own area in a reasonable time, all plans of co-operation and schemes for a New Empire would indeed be futile. The assumption on which I proceed, therefore, is that the new reforms which will establish a federal constitution with responsible government for India, will come into being soon and the causes of the acute political tension which prevails to-day be removed for ever. The unwelcome ghosts of political dominance and of its deformed child, Racism, must first be laid before the programme of Indo-British co-operation can be seriously discussed.

That programme must naturally take the line of a clear demarcation of interests. Any attempt to extend the sphere of British influence and direction over the entire range of Indian government would mean the negation of self-government. Any attempt to confine it within the narrow limits of the clauses regarding commercial discrimination would be to deny to Britain the opportunity to help us in building up Indian life. What is wanted, therefore, is to chalk out clearly

the area in which Britain and India can co-operate actively to the benefit of both. That is what I propose to do, in however meagre a manner, in the following letters.



## II

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE often had said to me in England. It is all very well for you to talk of Indo-British co-operation. What guarantee is there that, once you get the substance of political power in your hands, you will not turn it against us. that you will not use your authority to ruin British trade, as you very nearly did by your boycott, that you will not break down the steel frame of the superior Civil Services which we have created; that you will not sabotage British industry and confiscate British investments? You are entitled to receive a satisfactory reply to these questions and I shall attempt to the best of my ability to satisfy you that such apprehensions are wholly unreal.

There is no doubt whatever that the political machinery which the New Reforms will put in Indian hands will be used consciously for securing still further power. That is

inevitable when the reforms now under consideration are avowedly only for a transitional period. Nor do serious minded British politicians deny the legitimacy of utilizing such political power as we are able to exercise to gain the maximum measure of self government compatible with imperial interests. When the British Government declares that further reforms must depend upon the success of the present scheme, it is clear that what is meant is that if the political machinery that is handed over to Indians is used with moderation, success, and with a truly national purpose, Great Britain herself will not have any objection to withdraw to the farthest line of safety.

It must therefore be assumed that the new National Government will make every effort to work the reforms in such a way as to convert the Government of India into a truly Indian organization for without it their own programmes of social reconstruction, economic development, and national regeneration would be impossible. Why is it that India wants to rule herself? Why is it that she desires to substitute an efficient British administration

for one which might not be so efficient in the art of government? It is not merely because national self-respect demands it though undoubtedly that is one of the important urges behind the movement. The real reason is, because Indians feel that in all the vital spheres which affect their national life a British Government of India, because of its *non-national* character, is powerless to move. No fundamental changes in national life can be introduced, nor can the purposive organization of society—or national planning—whether it be in social or economic reorganization or in a general modernization of life and culture, be undertaken by the British Government in India. The social amelioration or cultural progress that has resulted from British rule has been incidental. By the very nature of its constitution the British Government in India had to leave well alone the anachronistic social system of the Hindus and often to maintain, through their Law Courts and administrative regulations, the inhuman customs of caste, marriage, untouchability, etc. Educated Indians have realized that no real progress can come in



India unless the government is prepared to face the issues of social life and deliberately move forward to an organization of society on a rational basis. The acknowledged inability of the British Government in this matter is what gives the national movement its true justification. It follows from this that India will not be satisfied unless the most unhampered right of legislation and administration belongs to her in her internal affairs. And we must frankly face the position that any political power that is conceded to India will be deliberately utilized to secure more.

What has, however, to be borne in mind is that such a policy is in no sense anti British. It would indeed be most unwise to look upon it as such. If Indian politicians try to injure imperial interests in the matter of defence, confiscate British investments or injure British trade, such action could be legitimately considered as being anti British. But any Indian who advocates such a policy would be a traitor not to British interests but to the interests of India. The defence of the Empire, as I pointed out earlier, is the defence of India and any attempt to weaken it would be

nothing short of suicidal. There is no doubt an outcry in India against what is called the disproportionate and unbearable military expenditure, and very likely that attack will continue, more as a political slogan than as a serious programme, till Indians are shown to their conviction that the expenditure is necessary and in no way disproportionate. So far it should be remembered that the actual problems of defence have been treated as a sacred mystery to be kept guarded from the polluting sight of the Indian. Naturally, therefore, he has no method of judging whether the vast expenditure incurred is necessary for India's own sake or whether it is not meant as a camouflaged subsidy to Britain. What he does see is that while vast sums are spent on the Army the Government of India always pleads lack of funds for all schemes of national development. When the needs of defence are fully known to Indians it would indeed be ridiculous to think that human nature in India would be so perverse as to insist that the vital demands of defence should be starved or cut down beyond the line of safety.

The fears of deliberate injury to British trade are equally without basis. I shall deal in another letter with the true aspect of the boycott of British goods which is occasionally preached in India. Since India is vitally interested in the British connection—the basis of that connection on the British side being commercial—it follows that all future collaboration must depend not merely on the freedom of, but on encouragement to, British trade. The Ottawa settlement demonstrated that people in India have realized this fundamental fact. To those who point to the propaganda for the boycott as evidence to the contrary, I may refer to the iniquitous cotton countervailing duty and the discrimination in freight charges, which used at one time to proclaim the desire of English trade to exploit India against India's own interest. That kind of argument leads us nowhere. What has to be remembered, however, is that the boycott of British goods in India is frankly recognized as a political weapon, not as an economic programme. The objective is entirely political and when substantial political power comes to India the *raison d'être* of such a movement

at once vanishes That in fact is the lesson of Ottawa and of the attitude of the Indian Legislative Assembly towards Imperial Preference.

If the apprehensions in regard to British trade are unreal, the fear that British investments in India would not be safe is altogether fantastic Very few people outside India know the extent of Indian penetration in the British Companies operating in India. To take one example, the British India Corporation of Cawnpore, the leading British enterprise in Northern India, has probably a majority of Indian share capital. The Imperial Bank of India is becoming increasingly Indian in its ownership Similar is the case with a very large number of rubber, tea and coffee plantations, whose shares are available on the market The penetration of Indian capital into British companies has gone to such an extent that any attempt to injure them would affect Indians as much as Britishers This tendency of the association of Indian and British capital in Indian industries is proceeding at such a rapid rate that it is possible to look forward to it as the most

important fact which is likely to govern the economic development of the future

There are no doubt a few monopoly companies which are either family concerns or, like the P & O and the Burma Shell, are of such vital concern to the Empire that India and the Indians have no voice in their affairs, though they affect the life of India intimately. In view of their attitude it is likely that the future Government of India will not look upon them as pet children—as the Government of India do to-day. That is a matter that can easily be set right by the companies themselves, once they realize that Indian goodwill and co-operation are necessary for the future—a difficult matter indeed for the P & O, which is the last stronghold and sanctuary of racialism in the British Empire, as any Indian who has travelled in one of their boats will bear witness.

The attitude of Indian nationalists to the superior services, still to a large extent European in personnel, requires closer examination. It is said generally by ex-civilians living in comfortable retirement in the mild seaside resorts of the South of England, that

the attitude of the Indian politicians towards the Civil Service is one of hostility and fear and that Indians will avail themselves of first opportunity to strike a blow at the prestige, authority and integrity of the I C.S. and to make the life of European personnel unbearable. It is not denied that there is hostility among all sections of Indian nationalists towards the Civil Services. They would indeed be less than human if they did not reciprocate the feelings of the Civil Services towards themselves. It is necessary to inquire into the character of this hostility, the causes from which it arises and the results that it would have on future political development.

It is first of all necessary to realize that the Civil Service in India is not a Civil Service as understood in other countries, but a governing corporation. Some of its main features were analysed by me in a previous work and I take the liberty of quoting from it.

Though the supreme executive authority was thus vested in the Governor-General in Council and in Governors in Council and Lieutenant-Governors in the Provinces, the administrative system which they directed was composed of

Civil Service which in its corporate capacity had such powers that it could claim, in fact, to be the Government of India. The Civil Services, before the Reforms held every superior appointment in India, with the exception of the Governor General and the Law Member of his Council, the Madras, Bombay and Bengal Governors and the Chief Justices of the High Courts. Even in the Viceroy's Council, all the portfolios excepting Law, and in times of crisis Finance, were held by members of the Civil Service. All the Lieutenant Governors belonged to the same service. A specified number of the Judges of Provincial High Courts were also Civil Service men. As the Montague-Chelmsford Report expressed it 'It (the I C S) has been in effect much more of a government corporation than a purely Civil Service in the English sense.' Mr Ramsay Macdonald, who was a member of the Public Service Commission (1913-1914), describes it thus 'The Indian Civil Service is more than a collection of individuals. It is a bureaucracy with a corporate life a machine, a freemasonry. It moulds the raw recruits into its own image. It has to work as a whole. Many officers become wheels in a mechanism working by rule and repetition.

The Indian Civil Service differed from the administrative services in other countries in

three ways First, it was predominantly British in personnel. Though the recruitment to the service was by open competition, since the examination was held in London, the number of Indian candidates was small. To keep the service essentially British in character was considered a necessity. Secondly, it was not exclusively an administrative body. The Civil Service claimed the right to advise the Government and insisted on being consulted on all matters of policy. In fact they constituted a governing caste, with rigid conventions and formulas. Thirdly, the Civil Service was not concerned merely with what may be called political administration. A large proportion of the superior judicial offices, under the High Court Bench, were reserved for them. They controlled, through the Secretariat, every branch of administration. Even the Public Works Department, forest administration, police and other technical services, were directed by the officers of the Indian Civil Service. In fact they combined the functions of the Civil Services with those of the political heads of departments in parliamentary countries.



The Civil Services, developed in an atmosphere of personal administration, had become, as a result of increasing control by the Secretariat, a soulless machinery out of touch with the population which it governed. At one time, slowness of communication with headquarters left much local freedom to the district officials—the man on the spot had to act for himself. Railways, telegraphs and telephones compacted the official machine to such an extent that the man on the spot became little more than a clerk or an agent of the man at the headquarters. Under the changed conditions of Indian political life, India required something more than good officials of that kind. Administration is a part of government and everywhere government is essentially political. But politics in India of the twentieth century differed essentially from politics of the nineteenth. Then political government meant only efficient administration with as little interference in the social life of the people as possible. Now, it involves an appreciation of collective thoughts, social forces, political energies, and not of these alone, but also of vague moods and unvoiced

feelings which are always facts *for* politics and may, at any time, become facts *in* politics. In short, the old-world distinctions between things political and things executive was getting gradually obliterated. The mere executive efficiency which the Indian Civil Service had developed to an astonishing extent, was not of a character which could rise to that higher political efficiency which develops an understanding of complex social tendencies and gives insight into the things that agitate the human mind.

It is necessary to realize that the point of attack of the Indians against the Civil Service is in their capacity as a *governing corporation* and not as a body of highly-trained and efficient administrators. It is their political power that the Indians attack, because the Civil Service have at no time concealed their objections to the transfer of control of policy from themselves to Indians. No Indian has anything but admiration for the administrative capacity of the Civil Services in India. No one desires to dislodge them from their positions of trust, responsibility and authority. But India will not

accept them as administrator politicians, as people who both lay down the policy and carry it into execution. The younger generation of Civil Servants are fortunately becoming alive to this position and, as the evidence of recently retired officials before the Joint Parliamentary Committee proved, are prepared to surrender their vested political interests and be content with the true position of a Civil Servant.

Apart from this political factor, there are two other factors which contribute to the feeling of hostility between the Civil Servants and educated Indians. The Civil Servant dislikes and affects a contempt for every educated Indian. *The origin of this dislike is the fear of being found out.* The reputation for omniscience, perfect virtue and unrivalled efficiency which they had built up and which they had deluded a large number of Indians into believing was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain in the face of the large number of European educated Indians whose attitude towards them had none of the unquestioning belief either in their racial, intellectual or moral superiority. Therefore

the Indian Civil Servant had always a feeling of uneasiness and was not quite so sure of his own inherent superiority when he had to deal with educated Indians. That is the reason of the affected contempt and the frank dislike for the 'Babu and the Pleader' and the exaggerated love for the uneducated masses. From the time of Raja Rammohun Roy to that of Rabindra Nath Tagore this attitude has persisted. It may sound extraordinary, but it is true, that the European Civil Servant in India gets on well with men of little education and less intelligence and is frank, friendly and courteous in his dealings with such people. But when it comes to men like Sir Tej Saprú, or the Rt. Hon V S Srinivasa Sastri or much less important but educated people, his attitude becomes one of suspicion, cold reserve and ill-concealed dislike. To this must be added the racial arrogance sometimes displayed by the civilians and their rigid feeling of caste. Naturally, the Indian politician is shrewd enough to sense this attitude and to guess its significance. No wonder, therefore, that this feeling is reciprocated.

It is fortunate that these causes are also slowly disappearing. The increase of the Indian element in the Civil Services, resulting in the new British recruits having to work under Indian senior officers, and the partial Indianization of the Governors' Cabinets by the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms, leading to the senior officers being placed under Indian Ministers and Executive Councillors, have led inevitably to an alteration of this attitude. The Civil Servant who believes in the inherent inferiority of the Indian has to accommodate his pride when he has to work under an Indian Minister, and no one can say who will and who will not become Minister in the next Cabinet. The dislike towards the educated Indian has also undergone modification for the same reasons. While with the older generation the spirit of 'the White Man's burden' may still be surviving, with the younger generations brought up under new conditions, the causes of mutual hostility may indeed be said to be fast disappearing.

What I have tried to show is that while there was undoubted hostility between the educated classes and the Civil Servants

brought up on the old traditions; the situation has very considerably improved within the last ten years, and with the creation of the new Government will totally disappear when the new generation of European officers, living side by side with their Indian colleagues and having no political bias or pronounced policy, take the place of the old Burrah Sahibs.

There is a further aspect of this question to which I may allude here. It could not have escaped your observation—and indeed it is a well-known fact—that a large percentage of the Indians in the Superior Services, who have attained their position by open competition, are near relatives of the Nationalists. It is unnecessary to mention any example, but in the ranks of those holding high offices in the Civil Services will be found many who are related to the most prominent Nationalist leaders. If the Nationalists had any intention of ruining the prospects of the Civil Services, is it in any way likely that the Nationalist politicians would have encouraged their sons and relatives to compete for the Civil Service and other superior official appoint-

ments? The fact is that Indian Nationalists are well aware of the inestimable value of a stable, efficient and contented Civil Service they realize that the maintenance of law and order, sound administration and efficient departmental work form the only basis of political progress. As long as the Services in India are content with that position and do not aspire to shape policies and decide fundamental questions of government, there is not the least danger to their future. There is every reason to believe that the Services have recognized and accepted this position.

What emerges from the above discussion is to my mind clear enough. The causes of friction and hostility between the Services and the educated public are slowly disappearing. They have to a large extent already disappeared, and with the increased Indian personnel in the Services and with the control of policy by the Legislatures they will wholly vanish. The politician will have no occasion to bait the official, nor the official any reason to treat the educated public with cold contempt. The transfer of political power would not therefore mean any change

in the administrative system The district administration, which is the basis of Indian Government, will go on as before: the Secretariat control will remain and follow the lines and the tradition that a century and a half have built up in India Both those who expect a radical change of methods and those who fear a complete breakdown will be equally disappointed so far as the administration of India is concerned. There indeed lies the strength of the future Government of India. Great Britain has built well and on solid foundations the edifice of Indian administration What Indians desire is not to pull down that edifice but to live in it, furnish it in their own style and order their own household





### III

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE assumption of all that has been said before is that in every important aspect of Indian Government, Indo-British co-operation will be essential. It is now necessary to examine the range of such co-operation in the field of political, economic, social and other activity. Taking the political field in its wider sense, it is obvious that here Britain's help is required by India in defence, in external affairs and to a limited but by no means inconsiderable extent in internal affairs. Indo-British co-operation will continue to be necessary for the defence of India and the Empire for a very long time. India through no fault of her own is not in a position to undertake her own defence either by land or by sea. That duty at the present time falls largely on British shoulders. By far the greatest moral duty that England has towards India is to prepare her to undertake

her own defence Great Britain has recognized this in principle. The general plan of the Reforms Scheme proceeds on the assumption that the defence of India must increasingly be the concern of the Indian people, that it is the duty of Britain to associate the Indian people with the higher tasks of India's own defence. Various measures have already been put into effect as a beginning of this policy. The establishment of an Indian Sandhurst, the scheme for accelerated Indianization of officers' ranks, the opening of the artillery and other Arms to Indians—these are definite steps which will, it is hoped, in time make the Indian Army really Indian. It may be a long and arduous process. No one claims that an effective military force of the modern type required for the defence of India could be created in India immediately. What is essential is not that the European officers should be displaced or that the army in India should be recalled, but that the humiliating position of an Indian Army officered and commanded entirely by the British people should be remedied. The task of educating India to the responsibility of

national defence is one that England can proudly undertake, and it is a sphere in which all Indians would welcome British association and direction

The creation of an Indian Navy is one in which Great Britain may be said to have even a greater and more vital interest. The expense and responsibility of the naval defence of India now falls exclusively on the British exchequer and Admiralty. If a small Indian Navy is created which would be able to undertake the normal defence of India on the sea, it would mean a substantial relief to Britain and a strengthening of her Eastern fleet.

In external matters the extent of India's interest in the Empire is not generally recognized. There are over a million and a half Indians living in the different tropical colonies of Britain, extending from British Guiana to Kenya. It is economically and politically a vast and growing interest which India cannot afford to overlook. The prosperity and development of these communities depend upon British goodwill. Nor does the matter end there. In normal years there is a steady flow of emigration from India to

**British Colonies** The pressure of population is great in many areas of India, and unless the protection and security of the British Flag and the economic opportunity which British enterprise affords in the vast outlying Colonies are available, this emigration would not be of benefit to the emigrants or to the Mother Country

This is undoubtedly a minor aspect The major range of political co-operation must be in India itself Here British collaboration is required and should if possible be confined to three heads (1) the maintenance of the unity of India against the disintegrating provincialism inherent in a country the size of a sub-continent with its separate nationalities and differences of language and culture, and emphasized by the federal form of the new Government. (2) The steady progress of British ideals and methods in the new parliamentary politics of the country and (3) Expert direction in the superior technical services like engineering, forestry, railway administration, etc

In regard to the first, namely the maintenance of the unity of India, it is obvious that

the disruptive tendencies which are natural and inevitable in India and of which Indian history is one long commentary, have been much strengthened by the federal idea of government. Federation involves a weak centre confined rigidly to the spheres marked out by the constitution. It involves also supreme and uncontrolled power for the provinces over a very wide field. The provinces of India are not small and insignificant areas, but countries larger and possessing more population than many European nations. It is but natural that with complete provincial autonomy they should develop a definitely provincial outlook, which might not take into consideration the supreme necessity of a strong central government.

It is well to remember that the unity of India such as it is to-day is essentially an administrative unity, created by the strong, all-powerful and unbending centralization of government. The provincial governments were, as their official name itself implied, only local governments, and they were subject to the close control, uninterrupted supervision and stern direction of the Government

of India. In all vital matters the legislative authority has been at the centre. It is only by this process that whatever unity India now possesses has been achieved. It is essential that this unity should be preserved at all costs, for once it is broken India will revert to the condition in which the East India Company found her.

The Federal Government as contemplated would require therefore the unbroken tradition of All India Services, where a non-provincial element would correct the natural provincialism of the Indian members. It would also require in the central legislatures the co-operation of non-official Europeans whose attachment to the provinces would be slender and who would be able to bring in political—if not in economic and financial—questions an unprejudiced All India point of view. The services which non-official Europeans have ungrudgingly rendered in the central legislatures during the last twelve years show what they can contribute in this direction. Every Indian leader who has been in the Indian Assembly has borne witness to the constructive co-operation of European

non-official members and to the inestimable value of their work. In a future legislature, where they are less tied to the apron-strings of officialdom, there can be no doubt that the European contribution to the federal and provincial legislatures will be of even greater value.

The maintenance of British ideals in politics is another avenue of activity for Europeans in India. It is frankly admitted by every Indian that the parliamentary system of government, together with its subsidiary institutions like municipal self-government, is essentially a British system. The Indian people, nourished in British political traditions and trained to the principles of British law and constitutional practice, have undoubtedly adapted themselves with some success to these methods, but no one will claim that the system is so deeply rooted either in Indian sentiment or in the Hindu or Moslem conception of politics as to enable us to dispense with either constant vigilance from Indian politicians or understanding co-operation from British sources. The non-official European community in India stands



in a position of unique importance from which they can help us to implant firmly in India the principles and methods of democratic government.

You will, I have no doubt, recognize that this is indeed an honourable position for the European community in Indian politics. Neither the national Congress nor any other body of extreme Nationalists is likely to contest it. In fact, every non-official European who has come into contact with the Congress leaders who count, such as Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajagopalchari, or Dr Ansari will recognize that the powerful body of opinion represented by these distinguished men is friendly to the co-operation of non-official Europeans while they are unalterably opposed to the system of the Government of India.

The necessity for British direction in the more technical Services is admitted and is indeed obvious. Big schemes of irrigation, electrification, forest development, etc., do not come to a stop merely because the Government of India becomes Indian. On the other hand, it may reasonably be ex-

pected that a deliberate effort will be made to push on with such schemes, for which Indian Nationalists have long been clamouring. The vast schemes of electrification undertaken during the last twelve years provide ample proof of India's desire to go forward with a policy of modernization. In all these spheres British direction, advice and technical skill are of the utmost importance. They provide an ample and ever-increasing scope for British enterprise, technical efficiency and initiative. Anyone familiar with the natural resources of India can imagine the development that is still possible by the use of the untapped energies of India's water; what inexhaustible possibilities there are, if cheap electric power can be made available in rural areas; what vast tracts may come under cultivation with wider irrigation. Nationalist India has no intention of sitting idle and allowing these energies to run waste. They expect with the assistance of British enterprise and experience to harness these vast resources for the benefit of India

You will now realize what is my vision of the position of Europeans in the future of

India I look upon the sympathetic co-operation of Britishers and Indians as the essential condition of success in the political field. But such co-operation should not be on the basis of the ruler and the ruled or of superior and inferior. In addition, it must clearly be recognized by the official and non official Englishman that the responsibility for making decisions in ordinary political matters remains exclusively with Indians, and that their co-operation is confined to a range of subjects where joint action would be beneficial to both.

I do not think anyone outside the school of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and Rudyard Kipling will deny that the position of Britishers as sketched here is in consonance with the best imperial traditions, and is one which Englishmen can with honour undertake to fill in view of the special relationship in which India stands to Britain. I hope you will recognize that this view, which most thinking Indians would unhesitatingly accept, is not based on any anti British feeling and that the limitations to British activity which it implies are based on the legitimate claim, which

Parliament has recognized, that India should so far as possible govern herself Undoubtedly the political position of Englishmen in a future self-governing India will not be the same as it is to-day To-day the Englishman decides what should be done in India: Indians are no doubt associated in that decision, but the decision is taken on the responsibility of the British Government Moreover, official and non-official Europeans have still very much the attitude of masters in India It is indeed unpleasant and perhaps difficult to part with a position of such power and accept one which, though no less honourable, is quite different from what it was before Am I wrong in thinking that men of intelligence and political foresight in England have recognized this change as inevitable and are willing to accept the position I have indicated?



## IV

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE more important sphere of co-operation between England and India which I visualize as the foundation for the future prosperity and the political progress of India lies in the vast area of economic life. In the political aspect of Indian Government most Indians and Englishmen already realize the necessity of co-operation. In the economic sphere, though such co-operation is equally if not more necessary, many people both in England and in India are actuated by suspicion, jealousy and even hostility, with the result that the essential features of the question are lost sight of and obscured by the dust of controversy and mutual criticism. In India we had a period of boycott, intensive propaganda against certain important British commercial interests and general opposition to the attitude of the British trading communities towards the preservation of their monopolistic vested interests. In England there has

been the sullen and bitter opposition of Lancashire interests towards the protectionist policy of India extending incautiously into a general hostility towards Indian self government. The shipping ring controlled by the late Lord Inchcape expressed itself as unalterably opposed to effective Indian reforms and most thinking Indians came to the natural conclusion that the vast business interests for which he spoke were determined to maintain at all costs their political dominance in India so that British interests might enjoy a monopoly in shipping, banking and the export and import trade. Again, the attitude of the City of London to the federal scheme has not been, to say the least, one of helpful co-operation.

These controversies are nothing but the *damnosa hereditas* of the economic system of the past. Apart from the boycott movement, a purely political agitation, the significance of which we shall come to, the prevailing hostility to British commercial interests in India arises from the history of the nineteenth century. It is well to remember that British trade in India was organized, as was perhaps

inevitable, almost exclusively for the benefit of Britain. All land and sea transport was concentrated in British hands. Banking was a British monopoly and naturally the export and import trade was in the hands of British firms. The Indian railways, though constructed with Indian money, were operated by British companies, and it was notorious that the freights were so arranged as to encourage external trade to the detriment of trade within India. The charges on goods transported between two internal stations often used to be heavier than direct transport to the ports. Again, the concentration of the shipping agencies and the export and import trade in the hands of a few European firms operated against rival Indian merchants securing shipping space. It is probably not known to many how the Japanese Shipping Company, Nippon Yusen Kaisha, extended its operations to India. The great Sir Jamshedji Tata, who was one of the pioneers of industrialism in India, found that on important occasions it was impossible for him to obtain shipping space in British steamers. Faced either with ruin or with the frustration



of his schemes, he went to Japan and negotiated with N Y K for their regular service to touch Bombay. The extraordinary bitterness with which the British India Steam Navigation Company—a subsidiary organization of the P & O—has fought any attempt of Indian concerns to share in the coastal trade of India is another instance in point. The fight between rival shipping concerns, you may say, is not a matter of national concern. But in India the position is otherwise. The agents of the British India Steam Navigation Company in most ports are European firms who are themselves shippers. The rival Indian firms, therefore, find themselves at a great disadvantage. The entire controversy over coastal shipping would have become unimportant if the P & O had recognized the necessity of Indian co-operation and converted B I.S.N into an Indo-British concern.

Apart from such short sighted activities meant to reserve the trade of India for a few British firms there has been much in the past that makes Indians suspicious of British economic policy. I need mention only two

examples whose injustice is now recognized by all the countervailing excise duty on cotton goods imposed on Indian manufactured textiles for the benefit of Lancashire, and the exchange policy followed by the Government in regard to the Reverse Councils, by which India's accumulated reserve in England was dissipated in the interests of British currency. It is futile and unprofitable to rake up past history. I have alluded to these facts only to show how the present attitude of mutual hostility and jealousy originated and what keeps it alive. What has been the result of all this to England? 'From whatever angle it is viewed,' wrote the British Trade Commissioner in India, 'the catastrophic decline in the imports from the United Kingdom of piece goods since the War and particularly during the crisis of the last eighteen months, strikes at the very heart of the British trade position in India. Of our total imports of India, cotton piece goods in 1913-14 accounted for 48 per cent, or nearly one half. In 1928-29, the proportion had fallen to one third and in 1930-32 to one fifth. The figure of the current

year (1931-32) will be lower still.

Whereas in 1913-14 imports provided three quarters and Indian mills one quarter of the machine made cloth available for consumption in the country, in 1930-31 Indian mills produced three quarters and imports provided only one quarter of the available balance for consumption. Of this one quarter the U. K. supplied only 58.8 per cent. 'British monopoly in export and import trade naturally has had to give way. Shipping, banking and other predominantly British interests also suffered in proportion. Attempts to maintain such monopolies, when India becomes increasingly self-conscious, can only lead to disaster.

What England must realize and face frankly is that, though India is predominantly an agricultural country, she is determined to produce as much of her need for manufactured goods as possible. For the rest she is willing to buy from Britain or the Empire, but what she can profitably produce she intends to produce herself. The new National Government will use all methods known to economists and administrators in furtherance of this policy: protection, quota, bounty,

reservation of orders for the home market. It is necessary that British industrial interests should understand this, because it is easy in such a case to adjust differences and to build our economic relations on conditions suitable to us both. The time is long past when Lancashire could either force a free market for herself in India or compel the Indian Government to impose a countervailing duty in her interests. There is, however, still room for both Lancashire and the Indian manufacturer in India, provided an understanding is amicably arrived at about the qualities and kinds in which they will not compete with each other. This fact has been brought home to England, much to the benefit of both parties, by the Bombay-Lancashire agreement, negotiated last year by the Clare-Lees delegation. That agreement, which provides for a demarcation of interests, may well be considered as opening a new era in economic co-operation. The Indian Assembly, let it be remembered, realized this even before Lancashire awoke to the possibilities of such an agreement. When in 1930 the Legislative Assembly passed a measure

of Imperial Preference putting on Lancashire goods a lower duty than that which was imposed on non Empire goods, it made such negotiations between Indian and British industries possible. The attitude of the Indian representatives at Ottawa and the ratification of the agreement by the Legislature, which came as a surprise to British industrialists, were but the logical outcome of this attitude. The visit of Mr. Mody, the representative of the Bombay millowners, to Lancashire, and the direct negotiations which resulted from that visit, showed that if existing facts are faced, there need be no occasion for rivalry and warfare between the two main centres of the cotton industry in the Empire.

The importance of the Bombay Lancashire agreement will become clear when it is realized that except in the cotton industry there is no rivalry between Indian and British industries. Jute, which is the next most important industry in India, is practically a monopoly production. Besides it is almost exclusively in British hands. Sugar, steel and matches, which are the other protected industries, do not in any way compete

with Britain. It is obvious that if Britain will only cultivate the Indian market she can have a practically reserved area for her goods.

What stands in the way is undoubtedly the spirit of hostility to the Empire idea and the boycott which has been a weapon for enforcing it. The boycott of British goods in India is essentially a political movement. The argument is that since Britain refuses to recognize India's legitimate right to freedom it is morally wrong for Indian people to buy British goods. It is also felt that if it could be brought home to England that you cannot trade with a people at the point of the bayonet, the British people, realizing their vast interests in India, would take a more reasonable attitude towards the Indian question. In either case, the boycott of British goods would not be a problem of any importance once the political question is satisfactorily settled.

It is here that a well-conceived and fair policy of imperial economic union, whether we call it by the old name of Imperial Preference or by the new headline of Empire Free Trade, comes to be of tremendous

importance. Such a plan will have to be based on two essential principles (1) that every part of the British Empire should differentiate against goods coming from foreign countries which are also produced within the Empire, and (2) that every part of the Empire should be equally free to develop its own industries, where such development is economically profitable or national interests require it. Naturally this would mean a division of markets within the Empire when there is a competition of interests, and it would also leave the units of the Empire free to develop their own industries by the aid of protection, legislative and otherwise. Unless provision is made for the sharing of markets in industrial goods and a steady consumption of India's raw material is ensured, the old scheme of Imperial Preference would not be acceptable to India. Both these conditions are essential: the first because India has growing industrial interests; the second because preference by England alone would not provide a stable market for her raw materials.

Essentially a policy of Imperial Economic Union means a definite economic planning

commission for the Empire. An unplanned, improvised or haphazard scheme, or one based on the idea of exploiting the tropical possessions of the Empire, would spell disaster, as the former would not give sufficient consideration to the industrial and economic interests of the units and the latter would provoke boycotts and other evils of economic and political ill-will. Lord Beaverbrook's scheme of Empire Free Trade, as adumbrated in the columns of the *Daily Express*, unfortunately suffers from both these defects. It seems to be based on the idea that apart from the self-governing Dominions, the rest of the Empire should be made into a dumping ground for British goods. Secondly, even with regard to the Dominions, and I assume to India, no definite scheme of preference has been worked out. In essence, however, the idea is not only sound, but one which should be welcome to all the parties concerned, provided the scheme worked out gives protection to local industries against unfair Empire competition and, where industries of different units compete for open markets within the Empire, the range of such



competition could be limited and the area carefully partitioned. India would co-operate actively in any scheme of Imperial Economic Union because it would secure for herself a steady market for her cotton which her mills cannot consume, and a reserved market for her tea, coffee, oil seeds, hides and skins and other goods for export. Great Britain would benefit by the preference which her manufactured goods would enjoy on the Indian market, potentially the most extensive market in the world. If India with her increasing standards of living, with her stable political conditions, and her large population constituting one fifth of the human race, is available as a free market for British industry except where it is in competition with Indian production, then the future of British industry could indeed be assured. All the ideas of 'autarchy' and organization of individual production based on the home market, which would inevitably reduce England to a second-rate power, would then be seen in their proper light.

The idea of a free and open market, on which the greatness of nineteenth-century

Britain was built, has broken down beyond repair. The spirit of economic nationalism expressing itself in tariff walls, administrative differentiation, etc, has made the free market nothing more than a dream of the past. As against it, even England has had to arm herself with the weapons first of safeguarding and then of protection. The vanished world of free market and open competition will not return. Apart from the fact that it has broken down everywhere, it must also be remembered that the world is now witnessing a vast and stupendous effort, spread over the largest single contiguous area in the world, in which production and distribution are controlled according to a central plan. The Soviet economic system is based on the negation of competition. It abolishes the free market equally for commodities as for labour. It is indeed autarchy conceived in terms of one-fifth of the world's area.

Though open competition and free market have disappeared like the ancient Atlantis below the rising flood of economic nationalism, it would be too much to say, as Russian thinkers are always prone to declare, that

communism is the only alternative. A reorganization of the British Empire as an economic federation on the lines suggested above would mean an effective rival scheme of imperial autarchy, where free market and open competition between the vast and widely scattered units would still have a wide though not unhampered field of operation. An economic union of the Empire on the basis of preference will be the most effective reply of the British Commonwealth, which Russia aptly equates with capitalism, to the communist idea of world economic order.

But in order to achieve this end a conscious policy has to replace the jealousy, distrust and drift which governs the Indo-British economic relationship. The British monopolies in India, especially in vital matters like shipping, banking and export and import trade must give place to Indo-British partnership. Equally in the new industries which India will undoubtedly endeavour to develop within her tariff walls, British capital and enterprise should have equal opportunity. In the long and intricate discussions

at the Round Table Conference on the question of commercial discrimination, the representatives of India never denied the right of full participation by Britain in the future economic development of India. But I am afraid the representatives of British monopoly were not equally liberal-minded. The refrain of all British arguments seemed to be that the monopoly of Britain in certain important aspects of Indian economic life should not be touched. It is just and legitimate that Great Britain should insist that there should be no discrimination against her nationals as such in the industries or trade of India, but it is quite another thing to demand that the monopolies which were acquired under other political conditions should, while denying India's right to participate in them, be free to ruin Indian enterprise and activity.

There are indications that even the P. & O. which, as I have said, is the last stronghold and sanctuary of racialism, is waking up to the new and altered conditions of India. The recent agreement which the British India Steam Navigation Company signed

with the Scindia Steam Navigation Company about the passengers and goods traffic to Burma is a welcome sign that the realization that Indians are entitled to at least a share in their own coastal traffic has come even in the most unexpected quarters. A still more significant development is the organization of British and Indian employers into one single Federation. Until 1932 Indian and British employers were organized on racial lines with unsatisfactory results to both, especially in view of the interpenetration of capital. This common organization, which is but the expression of the growing feeling of the identity of interests of British and Indian capital in India, is indicative of the line which future developments will take in the economic and industrial life of India.

This is also the reason of the notable change in the attitude of the British commercial and industrial community in India towards Indian political reform. As pointed out in my last letter, the partial democratization of institutions under the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme led to close collaboration, no doubt limited in range but intensive

in character, between European non-officials and Indian politicians. The economic problems with which the Assembly had to deal, such as protection, inquiry into foreign capital, Imperial Preference, etc., led to a clearer understanding of each other's views and a general realization of the identity of industrial and commercial interests and the necessity for political stability as the essential basis of prosperity. In the result, the European commercial community have on the whole become staunch supporters of political reform in India and have by this attitude stored up an amount of goodwill and friendly feeling which is certain to bear beneficial fruit in the near future

But it must be emphasized again that without a definite planned economy for the Empire based on local interests, Imperial Preference and sharing of free markets within the Empire, the wider aspects of Indo-British economic co-operation are not likely to be realized. No doubt for the limited purpose of co-operation between British and Indian capital in India, such a policy is not essential. But neither India nor England is,

as I have tried to point out, capable of effectively pursuing a policy of national autarchy. If autarchy or a policy of self sufficiency is to come, obviously the wider the area in which it is tried the better and more satisfactory will be the results. Great Britain requires an extensive market, a steady and uninterrupted supply of raw material and a wide field for investment. All these India can give her. India, on the other hand, requires foreign capital at low interest, a stable market for her raw material, a steady supply of machinery and a free tariff policy for the development of her essential interests. These Britain can provide. An Imperial autarchy is therefore not merely a desirable policy, but one on which the future of the British Commonwealth depends.

What any system of planning would involve has been stated with rare lucidity by Sir Arthur Salter in his Marshall Lectures on the Framework of an Ordered Society, from which I extract the following:

In the first place, such a system cannot be expected to grow spontaneously, throughout every sphere of activity in which it is required.

A lead must be given; general guidance and direction must be forthcoming. In the second place there will sometimes be a need for powers which can be given only by Parliament, on the advice of the Government, to deal with resistant minorities. In the third place there will be a continuing task of seeing that the institutions which develop in different spheres are co-ordinated with each other. In the fourth place the development at the best will be unequal. It will need stimulating, reinforcing and supplementing where it is weakest. In the fifth place—government itself which alone derives its authority from the public as a whole must remain the ultimate guardian of public interest. In the sixth place, there are many forms of economic activity, and there will be more, where not only is the public interest vitally involved, but where monopoly is desirable. In such cases some form of public ownership and control will probably be required. Lastly, government will of course have duties with which we are familiar in regard to the public finances, commercial policy, and so on.

Applying these principles to Empire economic planning it will be obvious that any attempt to evolve a policy of autarchy, with institutions appropriate for carrying it out,



will have to be preceded by a careful investigation of local interests and resources, the establishment in different units of institutions which would carry out an agreed policy, and the creation of a permanent and impartial machinery at the centre which will co-ordinate activities, stimulate, reinforce and supplement the activities of areas lagging behind the scheme of development. Economic freedom within the limits of this planning including fiscal autonomy for units, is undoubtedly essential in the peculiar economic conditions of the Empire. But such tariff rights should be used only for the purpose of creating local industries which could be economically developed or are of vital interest to the community and should involve a scheme of preference for goods manufactured in the Empire.

In a scheme of this character, India's interests are all with Britain. If British statesmen are wise in their generation they will not hesitate to utilize this exceptionally suitable form of Indo-British co-operation for laying down the basis of the field of economics on the lines indicated above.

## V

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I NOW come to an aspect of Indo-British relationship which unhappily is often forgotten or when remembered relegated to the background as being unimportant and unessential. This is the collaboration in cultural development. To me this is even more important; for the creation of a higher civilization in India with a deeper social purpose which combines the humanism, collective activity and critical spirit of the West with the deep traditions of learning, the intellectual enquiry and creative impulse of India, should be the ultimate aim of an Indian National Government. For what, after all, is the purpose of governmental organization? It is to my mind the creation of a vast complex of social activity which would enable the refinements of mind and comforts of body to penetrate to every stratum of society. Political power and the institutions by which it is

exercised are only the means to this end, and economic prosperity the necessary basis. Unless Indo-British co-operation leads to the creation of a new civilization in India, spreading its beneficent influence over all classes alike, it can have no conscious purpose or justification.

It is generally held by superficial observers that the Indian national movement is in essence reactionary as it is based on a belief in the supposed superiority of Indian civilization, that the roots are laid in a desire to 'go back' on the West to a mythical golden age. It is argued in support of this view that many of the vital movements in India to-day like the Arya Samaj, Gandhism, the mystical school of terrorists in Bengal, and the Jamiat ul Ulema and other Moslem organizations, believe in excluding European cultural influences and proceed on the assumption that the India of the future would draw its spiritual and cultural nourishments from the pure and narrow streams of indigenous origin.

This, I beg to submit, is only a very superficial view. It is true that the average educated Indian to-day believes blindly in the

superiority of Indian things: he is convinced that Indian music, even if he does not know it, is or must be superior to European music; that Indian art, both in its tradition and achievements, is incomparably superior to Western art, that the Indian view of life is more 'spiritual' and less 'materialistic' than that of Europe. But is this belief a reasoned conviction? Even a casual examination would show that it is not, that in fact it is only a protective armour, which a deep national instinct has spread over the youthful mind to shield it from the utterly ridiculous cultural basis of Indo-British education. Those who attack the Indian national movement on the ground of its reactionary and unreasoned faith in the greatness and goodness of things Indian forget that the system of education in India was so conceived as to emphasize the inferiority of everything Indian. Lord Macaulay, the arch-apostle of a complacent liberalism which believed that everything good, beneficial or fine was the exclusive property of the Protestant Whiggism of England, in drawing up his famous minute on Indian education, based his entire scheme on the

belief that all that Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian literature had to offer was not worth a single shelf of English books. The result was that Indian education, and all books written for the use of schools, proceeded on the assumption not only that the Europeans were a superior race, but that the Indians were inherently inferior, that if they had any art—which of course was denied—it must have come from Greece, if they had any theatre, it could only have been the reflection of Greek achievements, if they had any philosophy, *ex hypothesi* it could not be of any value, as it was not based on Plato or Aristotle. As for Indian history, it was but a long record of deception, treachery and defeat. India, of course, had no heroes, and in their absence Indian students at schools were taught to worship at the shrine of Clive, Hastings and Wellesley. One has only to turn over the text books prescribed for schools and colleges about thirty years ago to be convinced that if anything this description errs on the side of mildness. The attempted substitution of Indian humanism by Western ideas and the entire exclusion of the

former from Indian schools produced extraordinary results.

But the Indian mind, once the first shock of the compact was over, reacted differently from what was expected by those who originated the scheme. The first generation of English-educated Indians were indeed Black Englishmen, ashamed of India in their hearts and anxious to consider England their spiritual home. But the reaction was not slow in coming. The more the text-books insisted on the foolishness of everything Indian, the more convinced Indian students were of the opposite. The political movement, of course, helped this attitude and was in turn helped by the reaction. In short, the attitude of exclusive nationalism in culture is no more than the national impulse of protection and, in the case of the younger and more modern generation, both unreal and artificial.

A further fact to which attention may be drawn in this connection is the frankly contemptuous attitude of the average Britisher, official and non-official, to Indian culture. In the earlier days of the Company, men like Sir William Jones, Colebrook and

Warren Hastings took a deep interest in the cultural life of India. To-day, neither the civilian nor the trader is interested in any aspect of Indian life outside his own special job. That educated people can live in a country for a quarter of a century and know nothing of its music, painting, architecture, or even literature, may sound surprising, but it is an undoubted fact about the Britishers who reside in India. Among all the retired civilians and officials who discourse with self-satisfied authority on Indian questions, how many are there who could give a short lecture on Indian music, or count more than half a dozen names in classical Indian literature? The vast and luxuriant field of Indian culture within which they lived for years was an area to which they blinded their eyes and shut their ears with a deliberation which may appear strange to others, but seems callous and inhuman to us. The average Indian argued that if the British people living in India take so little interest in Indian culture, there was no reason why he should try to understand them beyond what is essential to find employment or

enable him to write correctly in their language. The attitude of indifference towards Indian things has been a growing tendency. An earlier generation produced even among the Civil Service men of understanding, scholarship and culture like Sir Alfred Lyall and Sir George Birdwood. To-day it is difficult to name scholars or even students of Indian life from among European officials

I do not deny or underestimate the very valuable contribution to the interpretation of Indian culture by non-official Englishmen *in England*, who through voluntary associations like the India Society and the Royal Asiatic Society have tried to arouse English interest in Indian civilization. But in India such attempts would perhaps be interpreted as being seditious, at least as being a denial of the superiority of Europe.

The deplorable consequence of the superficial animosity of the Indian towards Western culture and of the determined indifference of the European in India towards all things Indian, is that the vast field of intellectual co-operation between the two



communities lies fallow, unirrigated, and uncared for. It may well be hoped that once the political problem is more or less satisfactorily settled both Englishmen and Indians will turn their attention to this vast field, where the soil is so fertile and the prospects so bright. If Indians and Englishmen co-operate, the dawn of the new civilization which Raja Rammohun Roy hailed a hundred years ago may still grow into a glorious morning.

Humanism can after all be based only on national tradition. Where things of the mind are not understood or held in value, or where there is no deep tradition of learning or refinement, humanism cannot flourish. Whatever else may be said of India it is unlikely that anyone would venture to deny the deep tradition of learning and the almost exaggerated veneration attached to scholarship, which is a feature of Indian life. In fact, no people in the world have so continuous a tradition of literature and the arts as the Hindus, and it is doubtful whether any people have preserved, edited and cherished their classics with the same meticulous care through unbroken generations. Indian hu-

manism is therefore a deep and living force. Of its narrowness, hide-bound conservatism, and general tendency to confine itself to certain classes, it is not necessary for me to speak. A culture which is exclusively national, and which ceased for a long time to receive new ideas and whose ideals have come to be unrelated to social developments, must become more and more like a stagnant pool than like a deep current, ever reviving its waters and ever keeping itself pure. That is what has happened to the great culture tradition of India

But the love of learning and the tradition of scholarship of Indians cannot be denied. During the last thirty years it has produced astonishing results. What country outside the great Western nations, U S A and Japan can boast of the scientific, literary and artistic achievements of India in recent years —of masters in the realms of thought and the exact sciences like Ramanujam, Bose and Raman; of poets like Tagore, Iqbal and Ghalib, of men of spiritual attainment like Maharishi Devendra Nath Tagore, Sadhu Sunder Singh and Mahatma Gandhi If

contact with the West can produce such brilliant results, is it not worth while to churn up once again the milky ocean of Indian humanism and give to it a new life generating force which it has lacked through stagnation. The loss to India would indeed be immense if the fertilizing flood of European thought were not allowed to mingle its waters with the tradition of India and create thereby a new, wide and more profound culture.

To secure this end two parallel lines of activity seem to me to be necessary. It may be assumed that as time goes on Indian education will become more and more *Indian*, in the true sense, that is to say, that it will be based on the languages, literatures and traditions of the country, even where the instruction in colleges continues, as it is bound to, through the medium of English. Such a development is perhaps inevitable. This tendency is already visible in the leading Universities of India, where growing emphasis is laid on Indian subjects and on research in Indian history, philosophy, literature, etc. A gradual and perhaps complete reversal of Macaulay's policy will be

attempted by the vernacularization of secondary education on the lines successfully attempted in Japan. This would mean that as time goes on the influence of English culture and European thought which is now forced on India would tend to diminish, though the English language would maintain its popularity and continue to be studied with increasing avidity.

Though such a change is undoubtedly desirable, it would indeed be a great pity if the precious heritage of European thought, which India has not only adopted but which is just showing signs of a brilliant efflorescence, should come to be neglected in the process of 'nationalization'. To my mind, the future cultural development of India depends on the maintenance and cultivation of European traditions. I have complete faith in the individuality of the Indian mind and the deep hold of India's culture on her children, and therefore I do not fear that the assimilation of European ideas will lead either to a Eurasian type of mind or to a degenerate and hybrid culture, which adopts the form but is unable to realize the substance of an

alien tradition. The cultivation of European thought and culture is therefore essential for the mental and spiritual progress of India, but it must be divorced from the general educational programme of the provinces and must be independent of universities and colleges. What I should like to see established in the different centres of India are institutes of European culture, dealing with the entire range of literature, philosophy, political thought, economic and social theories, political and religious history. I do not include science in this, because science is universal and has no nationality. It will be taught in colleges and universities not as European science but merely as science. These institutes should be staffed by the best professors from England who feel that it is a mission entrusted to them to interpret the glories of their inheritance to another people. A two years' course at these institutes should be made compulsory for all professors of non-scientific subjects. A system of this nature will produce much greater appreciation of European achievements and would have a more profound significance on Indian thought than

the substitution of Indian by European humanism, which has been tried with only moderate success during the last century.

Side by side with this it is necessary to have a co-ordinated system of education at the various university centres of England and Scotland for selected Indian students from the different provinces. I must first of all say that the present system by which Indian students are encouraged to consider a course of instruction at a European university a necessary superstructure to their technical education in India is fundamentally wrong and unwholesome. The large number of Indian students who go to England to qualify for medicine, engineering, accountancy, forestry, etc., constitute a reflection on the educational institutions of India and not an evidence of the desire to understand European civilization and drink deep at the wells of British culture. So far as these technical subjects are concerned, it is essential that a determined attempt should be made to improve the standards of instruction and training in India, and thus eliminate the moral compulsion exercised on Indian

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students to go to English institutions by the preference shown to British degrees. A certain number of students would continue to visit British and other Continental centres of research and that is in every way to be encouraged. But the present system by which the qualifying examinations of British universities in these technical subjects are considered the standard for superior appointments in India is one which obscures the real benefits to Indian students of a genuine education in England.

What I would beg to suggest is something quite different. It is that the different provinces in India should select from among youths of intelligence, social influence and general intellectual interests a certain number who should be distributed among the centres of British learning, Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh and some of the major provincial universities which attach value to a cultural education. The selection of candidates should be by an independent body like the Rhodes Trustees on the recommendation of the provincial governments, and the students should be generally of the class who would

normally devote themselves to political and social work in India Ten or twelve years ago, before the blighting official control of admission to Oxford and Cambridge came into full effect and, turned those seats of learning into training-grounds for Indian entrants to the Civil Service, practically excluding non-official Indian students by the strict limitation of numbers, the majority of those who went to Oxford and Cambridge were urged on by a desire to understand what was best in England The result has been extremely beneficial to Great Britain and to India. The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms were practically run in most provinces, and the independent institutions set up by them staffed, by Indians from British universities. In unofficial public life, their voice counts for a great deal I am not mentioning these facts to show the achievements of men trained at Oxford, Cambridge or London but to indicate the value of such an education to Britain and to India. Nothing has been more deplorable than the attempt made since the War to limit the admission of private candidates who desire to reside at Oxford and

Cambridge purely for the sake of a liberal education and their substitution, so far as possible, by Civil Service probationers

What I would strongly advocate is that this policy should be reversed, that the admission of carefully selected private candidates should be encouraged, not so much with a view to turning them out as accomplished scholars, but as people who have understood the humane spirit of European civilization. It is through them and with their help that a new society can be built up in India. It is the failure to realize this fact that has been the cause of much wasted effort in education and bitterness of feeling in social relationships between Indian students and Britishers in England.

The problem of the future of Indian arts and music is to my mind similar. The narrow exclusivism which would confine the inspiration of art to the stream of national tradition has had an unfortunate vogue in India, for reasons similar to those analysed earlier in this letter. But it was not through such an attitude that the great periods of Indian art found their genius of expression. It was the

wholesale importation of Persian art technique by the Moguls which produced the glories of that truly Indian school, the paintings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the architecture of the Moguls. It was not by excluding other art traditions that the Rajput and Pahari schools come into existence. Even if we go into the artistic origins of the earlier periods, the Maurya, Scythian, Gupta and Ajanta periods, we shall find not merely foreign influences but the assimilation of foreign methods and technique and even forms. The Asoka pillars bear very definite evidence of Persian influence. The earlier Buddhist sculptures are frankly Gandharan or Indo-Greek, and the magnificent balustrade of Sanchi attests the generous cosmopolitanism of Hindu art tradition. What Indian art needs to-day is a new inspiration, which can come not from the cultivation of stereotyped forms, but from the importation of new ideas and technique. There can be no doubt that there is everything to be gained and nothing to be lost by a definite and conscious effort to transplant into India the artistic traditions of Europe.

The Indian artistic tradition is so virile and so broad based on the religion and social life of the people that such an importation of foreign ideas will lead only to the growth of new schools and not to the elimination or destruction of indigenous ones. It will widen the range of Indian artistic effort and give to the craftsmen and the artisan the ideas which they have so long been waiting for.

It should not be thought that I do not either appreciate the achievements of the modern schools of Indian artists or value highly their effort to revive the true national tradition in art. All that I urge here is that an exclusive spirit in art is not consistent with its true genius of creation, which must ceaselessly search for new forms, through which it can express its ideas best and new technique, with which its effects can be improved or brought home to a wider circle. The artistic tradition of Europe could therefore contribute much that is of use to India, and if in a spirit of narrow nationalism we exclude this source of enjoyment and inspiration we are ourselves the poorer for it.

It cannot be said that Britain has done in

this field what she could have done to the common benefit of both countries. The attitude of the Britishers in India has been that of the pure Philistine, whose supreme representative was Lord William Bentinck who, according to Lord Curzon, decided that the Taj Mahal was to be pulled down and its marbles auctioned, and its gardens turned into an experimental farm. I do not forget the marvellous work which Lord Curzon initiated of preserving the historical and artistic monuments of India and the impetus he thereby gave to the revival of artistic traditions, but it is painful to think that no Viceroy has ever had the imagination to create a central gallery of European paintings, so that Indians who have not the opportunity to visit Europe can appreciate the great masters of the West. Except in the private collections of a few princes like the late Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Nawanagar and His Highness Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwar of Baroda, it is difficult in India to see European paintings of more than ordinary merit. Surely it is time that England woke up to the value of showing to Indians the culture of

which they in Europe are the inheritors and which India as a partner in the Commonwealth is equally welcome to share and enjoy. Is it too much to ask that Great Britain should along with the Federal constitution give to India a fully endowed gallery of European paintings as a mark not merely of her good will but of her invitation to India to share in the glorious artistic heritage of Europe?

With regard to music also, it is my belief that the range of enjoyment could be enormously widened if a systematic attempt to cultivate European music were made by Indians. After all, in India there is an ever-growing body of men with European tastes in these matters, to whom both European and Indian music have an equal appeal, and it is astonishing that no serious effort has so far been made to naturalize in India the music of Europe. Wagner, Beethoven, Mozart—what a rich and varied world of harmony, sensitiveness and feeling there lies open for Indians to enjoy and appreciate if only the opportunity is made available to them! Indian music has such direct appeal that no Indian would willingly give it up, but that is

no reason why the music of Europe should not also become a part of Indian tradition

In literature alone the influence of Europe has already produced abiding results. Every Indian vernacular has benefited by the intensive study of English classics which the educational system of India forced upon Indians. If to-day there is visible in the modern Indian languages a revival which no one can deny, it is due to the influence of English literature. It has not affected the individuality or the classical tradition of the vernaculars, but it has introduced into them a new life and a new critical and creative spirit. Dr. Tagore is the supreme example, but it is a mistake to think that he is a solitary figure in the literary world of modern India. All important Indian languages bear witness to the deep penetration of European ideas into literary form and criticism. In fact, the remarkable change that has come over the Indian vernaculars, transforming them from dialects into vehicles of modern culture and thought, is almost entirely due to the influence of the English language.

If in literature such a beneficial change



could have been brought about, there is no reason to think that equally striking results could not have been achieved in art and music. It is only the indifference of the British rulers, their lack of imagination and the suspicion with which the average Civil Servant has viewed all matters which would *bring him into contact with the Indian*; that have been responsible for keeping India and England apart in matters of culture. The time has now come when, in the interests of the two countries, this attitude should be abandoned, and Indians and Englishmen should make a combined effort not only to understand each other, but to break down the narrow barriers of thought and feeling which separate the two communities.

## VI

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE sketched in my previous letters tentatively and in bare outline what I conceive to be the lines on which the Indo-British Commonwealth should evolve. There is no racial kinship between Britain and India: nor are there between them the binding ties of a common history through centuries such as may unite two different peoples. But they have what is more, the golden bond of common interests, the conviction that the future prosperity, progress and greatness of both depend upon their willing and intimate co-operation. The dissimilarity of culture and differences in race and language should not obscure this fact, on which alone can a future Indo-British Commonwealth be reared.

But before any serious effort is made to pursue a policy on the lines indicated, there are many ideas and prejudices which Indians must shed and many facts and situations

No doubt the lack of political power stands in the way, and it is permissible to hope that once this is achieved national energy will be directed towards these purposes. But it is necessary to emphasize that neither untouchability nor caste was introduced by the British Government, nor were the thousand and one anachronistic social customs of the Hindus, such as child marriage, enforced widowhood and the restrictions on food, marriage and social freedom. It may be that the religious neutrality of the Government stood in the way of effective action, but the demand for such action is only of comparatively recent growth. Britain has to answer for much in India but not for the outrageous social philosophy of the Hindus, or for their belief in the transitoriness of this world or for their philosophic acceptance of misfortunes based on the twin conceptions of transmigration and Karma.

It will no doubt be painful for Indians to accept the idea that for the more serious ills of their country they themselves have been responsible, and that Great Britain's part in them has been only the negative attitude towards

these questions which she, as an alien government, felt bound to adopt. But it is high time that Indians not merely realized but proclaimed their own responsibility. It is only then that the greater and more urgent responsibility of changing these conditions will be widely recognized. She is entitled to get active support and patient collaboration from Britain in this difficult task, and doubtless they will be forthcoming once the responsibility is frankly accepted by Indians themselves.

If these are the ideas which Indians should shed, there are others equally fundamental that Englishmen should exercise. The ridiculous idea of racial superiority, which has so long held sway in India, is likely to become dangerous in the future. To flaunt before a conscious Indian people, exercising political power in their own country, the crude ideas of the Anglo-Saxon as the salt of the earth and the European as the elect of God, is to invite trouble and put artificial barriers in the way of co-operation. Though in India itself this tendency is on the wane and would disappear in time, the political attitude of

the British Dominions, especially South Africa, and the Crown Colonies such as Kenya, with which India has to deal, is likely to embitter relations between Britain and India. Indians do not object to the policy of exclusion followed by Canada, though they may consider it unjust. But the discrimination on the basis of race made by the South African government and disabilities in regard to civic rights of Indians born and domiciled in the Union, and the galling restrictions with regard to land purchase, trading licences and residential areas enforced by law, can bear no other interpretation than that of racial arrogance. It is, of course, unjust to blame Great Britain for what the self governing Dominion of South Africa does, but what explanation except that of racial discrimination can be offered for the policy which her Colonial Office supports in Kenya of excluding Indians from the highlands of that colony. Unless Great Britain realizes that racialism can have no place in her Empire she will only be nourishing and encouraging those elements in India, at present insignificant, which preach hatred

of the European and oppose all schemes of imperial co-operation.

It is, however, not only in some of the Crown Colonies and South Africa that this attitude of racial arrogance asserts itself. In Great Britain itself, the feeling of dislike to all coloured people has grown to such an extent that in boarding-houses and cheaper hotels it is difficult for Indians to secure accommodation. For students and others who cannot afford to pay the tariff of the first-class hotels, this has indeed become a serious problem and in consequence they become intensely anti-British. The danger of this attitude can well be imagined when it is realized that it is the youths who come to England for study who will one day shape policies in India. To prove that I am in no way exaggerating I can give numerous instances of high-born Indian gentlemen being refused accommodation on one pretext or another after they had booked rooms in advance. No less a person than Jawaharlal Nehru, a product of Harrow and Cambridge, arriving in England with his wife and sister, had to go from hotel to hotel in search of

accommodation when he found that the rooms he had booked were refused to him on the ground of his being an Indian. It is true that leading men in England realized the mischief and danger of this attitude and its possible results on the Indo-British relationship.

An important change that must come over the British officials in India is in regard to what I may call their 'caste mentality'. A small community living in the midst of an alien people is bound to develop two separate codes of morals and conduct, one in regard to themselves and one in regard to the 'natives'. That is inherent in the facts of the situation, nor has the Anglo-Indian community in India escaped this development. As a result the English people in India have one standard for their conduct among themselves and another one in their relation with Indians. The most famous example when this caste morality came to full public display was when Lord Curzon, who had taken action against a European regiment for refusing to identify some soldiers who had murdered an Indian woman, was insulted by the entire European community at the Delhi Durbar.

The facts are indeed well known. Several soldiers of a European battalion outraged an Indian woman to death. No punishment was meted out by the officers and when Lord Curzon insisted on a prosecution, the battalion refused to identify the criminals, but Lord Curzon with his conception of imperial justice took stern action against everyone concerned. When the regiment appeared at the Durbar in Delhi, the entire body of European spectators applauded it to the echo, and it was not concealed that the demonstration was meant as an expression of sympathy towards the regiment and of disapproval of the action of the Viceroy. The Indian spectators took up the cue and, when Lord Curzon appeared, they forgot his political attitude and cheered him in a way that no Viceroy had been cheered before, for putting the life of an Indian servant before the prestige of a regiment.

This feeling of caste morality is well brought out in Mr E. M. Forster's classic novel, *A Passage to India*. The climax of the novel comes when the rumour spreads that an Englishwoman has been assaulted by an



Indian in a cave which she went to visit with him. Feeling immediately flares up on racial lines and when the lady finally denies that she has been assaulted, the European community promptly rejects the statement and denounces her. It is this idea of 'sticking by each other, right or wrong, as long as the injury is to one outside the community, that is at the basis of the Anglo-Indian Club morality, and unless this attitude gives place to one of common sense, opinion will continue to follow racial lines in India.

Apart from this, it is necessary, if Indo-British co-operation is to develop on healthy lines, that English people in England should awaken to a new sense of responsibility, not the old imperial mission of 'trusteeship' and 'carrying Law to the Lesser Breeds', but of understanding, sympathy and friendship. There is nothing that the average Indian dislikes more heartily than the talk of Britain's trusteeship in India, nothing has created more misunderstanding, for it is not difficult to prove from Anglo-Indian history that Britain has broken the law of trusteeship in deriving profit for herself from the

properties of her ward and the manipulation of her interests. The trusteeship doctrine has been unfortunate and the less British imperialists talk about it, the more pleased Indians would be

The trustee idea and the mission of civilizing the barbarian having failed, I submit it is time that an effort was made to substitute friendship and understanding for these high-sounding phrases. India would welcome British friendship, but no nation will suffer patronage. The extent and depth of the goodwill and friendship towards India which prevail in England are not known to Indians, nor have Englishmen made any effort so far to make Indians realize that they exist. Perhaps out of that queer dislike of any kind of display of sentiment which is so characteristic of British people, perhaps partly out of a feeling that Indians do not appreciate and are not grateful for what Britain has done, Englishmen have more often allowed themselves to be misunderstood in this respect. It is indeed too much to expect any subject people to be grateful to its rulers, but if the attitude of superiority inherent in the

government of one people by another disappears, there is no reason why Indians should not recognize, and Great Britain should not display, the deep feeling of friendship which the English as a people have for India. To a large extent this is also true of India's attitude towards England. There are but few English educated Indians who have not a deep regard for England—the land from which they have derived their knowledge and in whose tradition and culture they have been brought up. But political factors render it impossible for them to display that friendship. If truth were known, it would be found that England has no truer or more loyal friend than the Indian Nationalists who are in most cases bound by a hundred ties to England. Who are England's enemies in India—the Nationalist leaders, most of them educated at Oxford, Cambridge or London, or trained in the law schools of India, who even when they oppose England's policy reflect the culture of England and the glory of her heritage, or the Pandits and Maulvis, who even while they sing the praises of British rule oppose tooth and nail everything

that England stands for! To consider the latter as friends of England merely because in their desire to maintain their inherited authority over the ignorant and the superstitious, they are prepared to support at any cost a government which remains neutral in religious and social matters, is to my mind to deny all that England stands for.

If this spirit of friendship, which I assert exists but fails for lack of expression, is to be cultivated and to bear fruit, then it is necessary that English people should realize their responsibility to the large body of young Indians who live in their midst or visit England annually. There are over 2,500 Indian students in the various universities of England and Scotland. Has any attempt been made—not by official sources which no Indian would trust—to create in them a spirit of imperial relationship or to bring them into close contact with the generous elements of British life? As one who has lived in close contact with Indian students in England for over twenty years I can say without fear of contradiction that no such effort is being made. When you get a Head of

a college or a professor who takes a genuine interest in their welfare, men like Sir Michael Sadler, Dr R. R. Marrett, or Dr John Murray, they carry back with them memories which form strong links in imperial connection. When, as more often is the case, they are made to feel like uninvited guests at a banquet then the result is naturally not very satisfactory

Of course a great deal of patience, toleration and sympathy is needed in dealing with Indian students, who are not all of the same class, or of the same educational or social standing. They are sensitive, quick to feel slighted and anxious to maintain their racial dignity. But it is equally true that they are keenly responsive to kindness and friendship. Is it too much to expect that men of imagination and sympathy should take this question in hand and attempt to convert the enthusiasm of youth into friendship instead of turning it into the barren channels of bitterness?

It is equally important that the increasing number of annual visitors to Britain from India should find social amenities open to them and their visit to England made

generally pleasant. London is year by year becoming more and more the metropolis of the Empire. If the distinguished Indian visitors who come to England in all admiration and friendliness, instead of being made to feel that they are in a country with which they have close and abiding ties, are made to feel that they are unwelcome strangers, the effect is not likely to be beneficial either to India or to the Empire. During the last few years a number of unofficial bodies like the British Indian Union under the presidency of H R H. the Duke of Connaught have come into existence to fulfil this important function. Moreover, the last four years of continuous contact between leading British and Indian statesmen have created an atmosphere of social friendliness which to my mind is perhaps among the major results of the policy of the Round Table Conference.

I may perhaps allude to the great part that the Royal Court has been playing in this connection. The growing social recognition of Indians in England follows the magnificent lead given by the King and Queen, at whose functions Indians have always had their

legitimate place. The slow opening of social doors in England and the increasing realization in social circles of their responsibility towards Indian nobility and gentlemen who visit England, are welcome signs that the traditional attitude is undergoing a modification which may have far reaching results in our racial relationship.

## VII

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE tried to convey to you my ideas of the general lines of development which the Indo-British relationship should follow. What would such a Commonwealth as I have visualized mean for England, India and the world? To answer this question it is necessary that we should realize the alternatives that lie before each.

What are the alternatives for England? To my mind England can choose one of four courses.

- (i) a policy of national self-sufficiency.
- (ii) a policy of alliance and co-operation with the United States—the idea behind the vague programme of the English Speaking Union.
- (iii) a policy of imperial domination, of the exploitation of India and the Crown Colonies and a tariff union



with the Dominions—the idea underlying the Empire Free Trade movement.

- (iv) the development of a Commonwealth based on economic collaboration of all the imperial units, having as its main basis the co-operation of England and India

Let us now examine each of them in turn

A policy of national self sufficiency has some prominent advocates in England. They advocate the reconstruction of the economic life of England on the basis of the home market and a planning of production, distribution and consumption, which would eliminate unemployment, waste and foreign imports. Assuming for a moment that such a policy is possible, let us see what it would involve. The whole economic structure of England is built up on the basis of Britain being the workshop, if not of the whole, of a large portion of the world. The main industries of England, cotton, wool, iron and steel, shipbuilding and the carriage of goods are only in a very small degree dependent on

the home market. In any scheme of autarchy these must shrink and their place be taken by industries which are economically unprofitable for England to develop. In any case, with a population of over 45,000,000 people and a cultivable area far below what is required for a sufficiency of food supply, it becomes necessary for Britain to import her foodstuffs. These have to be paid for either in services or in manufactured goods. Besides, it is obvious that the raw material for the manufacture of goods even for home consumption must to a large extent come from outside. These have also to be paid for. Clearly economic self-sufficiency for Britain is possible only if there is either a very large reduction of population, or its equivalent, a large reduction in the standard of living.

The fact is that national autarchy cannot be tried as a policy except in countries which, like the United States or Russia, are large enough in area, with a sufficiency of food supply and raw material and a variety of climatic conditions and natural resources, to make them independent of other countries. National self-sufficiency could no doubt be

carried out as a policy by America or Russia, but certainly not by the United Kingdom standing by itself. Nothing is so clear in modern economic life as the need for large economic units. The whole of the structure of British economic life is based on the consideration of the world as a free market for its goods. That position has inevitably disappeared under the pressure of a high tariff in all countries, and countries with larger home markets and raw materials available at hand, once they could develop the industrial technique and efficiency of Britain, were bound to attack British monopoly in the free markets while safeguarding their own home markets by a high tariff. Self-sufficiency for Britain would therefore mean the abdication of her position as a world power, the surrender of the competitive markets to America, Russia and Japan and a withdrawal unto herself, which would reduce the standard of her living and undermine her civilization built through centuries of prosperity.

An economic alliance with America, dividing the markets, sharing the invisible exports and controlling the monetary policy, is



alliance with America would indeed mean nothing less and the fact that this is clearly realized in England is seen by the jubilation which takes place when any American owned industry or corporation operating in Britain is regained for British control, as in the case of Boots Cash Chemists, early in 1933

The third alternative is Lord Beaverbrook's Empire Free Trade based on close co-operation between Britain and the Dominions, with India and the Crown Colonies as free markets and areas for the cheap production of raw materials

The argument for Empire Free Trade is based on three assumptions first, that the great Dominions of Canada and Australia, peopled predominantly by men of British stock, could be made to develop into densely populated countries, secondly, that they would continue to produce raw material for British industries and would remain satisfied with the filial duty of providing markets for British manufactured goods, and thirdly that the Crown Colonies and India could be compelled to buy British and Empire goods

—thereby providing a closed market against foreign competition.

Each of these assumptions could be proved to be impracticable and based on fallacious reasoning. It is obvious that a large increase of population by a process of imperial emigration is not possible in any case within the next two generations. Even if such a development were possible, what reason is there to think that either Australia or Canada would be content to serve the needs of the mother country and not themselves embark on a policy of active manufacture? With a largely increased population sharing the industrial traditions of England and with natural resources ready at hand, it is but logical that they should embark on a policy of rapid industrialization, competing with the mother country in other markets and protecting their own by higher tariff walls. The attitude of Canada during the Ottawa negotiations, and the economic friction between Australia and Lancashire which came to a head last July, clearly prove that the Dominions would not at any price accept the position allotted to them under the

Beaverbrook Scheme of being producers of primary goods for the benefit of British industries

The fact is that economic nationalism in its aggressive form has spread to the Dominions. Those communities, more advantageously placed than Britain in some respects, have made it clear that their policy cannot be subordinated to the welfare and prosperity of British industries, and they will, so far as their conditions permit, follow vigorously a policy of economic nationalism, using if need be, all the weapons known to protectionist finance, to develop their resources. A large increase in the population of the Dominions is, therefore, likely to lead to a rivalry between them and the mother country instead of strengthening a feeling of Empire solidarity.

The third assumption, that India and the Crown Colonies could be compelled to buy British goods and exclude foreign manufactured goods, is equally open to valid objections. The rivalry between Indian and Lancashire cotton has already been alluded to. The case of steel is similar. While preference for British goods would no doubt be

accepted by India, her own export trade with other European and Asiatic countries is not so negligible as to be sacrificed on the altar of imperial sentiment. The attempt to differentiate against Japanese goods led to an immediate threat by the Japanese traders to boycott Indian cotton, and it was only after prolonged negotiation that a compromise was found which satisfied both Japanese and imperial interests. Similarly, when this year, on the Report of the Tariff Commission, the Indian Legislative Assembly, in renewing protection to Indian steel, introduced the principle of preference for British steel, Belgian interests threatened retaliatory action. It should not be forgotten that Indian industry being, as I have pointed out earlier, Anglo-Indian in composition, this rivalry between England and India is not racial. Europeans in India engaged in industry are staunch supporters of protection, and any attempt to impose English goods on India would in many cases injure them as much as Indian manufacturers.

The attempt to force British goods on the Crown Colonies is a policy of equally doubtful



results, as is proved by the example of Ceylon. The legislature of that colony refused to impose the quota system on Japanese goods which was suggested by the Imperial Government. The Colonial Office in its desire to emphasize imperial unity decided to compel Ceylon to exclude Japanese goods, and exercised the extraordinary powers vested in the Secretary-of-State for the Colonies—under an Act intended solely for the maintenance of peace and tranquillity—to promulgate an Order in Council over the head of the Ceylon Legislature and the Ministry, giving effect to the quotas. A constitutional crisis has been the result and a widespread attempt is now being made to organize an effective boycott of British goods as a reply to the Order in Council. One more proof that trade cannot be carried on at the point of the sword.

Under such a system of exploitation could India, enjoying a substantial measure of self government, be compelled to buy English goods or even to give preference to goods of British manufacture? Obviously not. Without close Indo-British co-operation

no scheme of Imperial Preference would be possible 4

The alternative, therefore is a close economic union with India. It is true that since British exports to Empire countries are only 44.5 per cent of her total exports, and imports from the Empire countries are even less (29.5 per cent), economic self-sufficiency would be impossible even if the Indian market were developed far beyond its present capacity. But what such an economic union would effect is to provide a stable market, a definite and calculable basis for the reorganization of industrial life. With tariff walls going higher and higher and with monetary conditions daily more unstable and each political unit trying to make itself economically independent, what Britain needs is as wide an economic unit for her industrial organization as possible. India alone provides that. With India as a certain and reserved market in goods where Indian industries do not compete, it is possible for England to reorganize her industries

For India the alternatives are even more hopeless. They are either an effort to attain

political independence, or the economic nationalism within the Empire. In the first case, it is hardly necessary to point to the years of misery and chaos that will follow before national independence is achieved and, when once achieved, to the travail of anarchy and confusion before a settled national government could establish itself over the whole of the sub-continent. No doubt through heroic measures of resistance, regardless of cost and extending over many years, India may be able to achieve independence. But the mere process of achieving that independence would lead to a breakdown of the institutions through the binding force of which alone India is now united. The vast size of India, its historical tendency towards dissolution the moment the powerful hand of a central government is withdrawn, the growing integration of its many nationalities, would alone make quite impossible any successful attempt to supplant the present administration by a totally independent national government. The example of China, where at least the Middle Kingdom has a continuous tradition of unity

which India lacks, is before us as a warning. Those who point to the success with which Russia after the Revolution brought once again under a single government practically the whole of the Tsarist Empire, where the geographical immensity is greater and the cultural, linguistic and national and other dissimilarities equally complex, forget that the Russian revolutionaries took over the military machine of the Tsar, and secondly that there was in European Russia one predominant White Russian nationality which was able to assert its authority over the rest. National independence achieved without the prospect of a united government can only lead India to a relapse into the eighteenth-century anarchy when every local chieftain carved out a kingdom for himself and defied the central government, which was too weak to assert its claims and too proud to give them up.

If the alternative of independence is to be ruled out, there remains only the possibility of a policy of exclusive nationalism within the Empire. Is that in India's interest? Can India afford to try successfully the policy of

De Valera and Hertzog? Apart from the fact that, in view of the control of defence by Britain, there is not the least chance of such a policy succeeding, where would it lead India? I have tried to show in my previous letters that the steady advancement of India in the political, economic and cultural spheres is impossible without the constant co-operation of Britain. A policy of Sinn Féin apart from bringing economic ruin and political upheaval, would undermine the very basis on which India desires to advance. Plainly, therefore, the only real alternative before India is that of a close and intimate co-operation on the basis of equality and partnership with Britain.

What are the forces actively working for such a policy in India and what is their strength? There is first of all the large and growing body of Indian industrialists and big business men who, once their special complaints and fears of unfair rivalry are removed and they feel secure in the conviction that within India at least they will have every chance of advancement, will be only too anxious to co-operate with British

industry and commerce. The recent agreement between Lancashire interests and the mill-owners of Bombay shows that both parties realize where their interests lie. The strength of commercial and industrial opinion is very great in India and co-operation between British and Indian capital in India is the most powerful link in the imperial connection.

Again, there are the Princes and States of India. They constitute very nearly one-half of the area and one-fourth of the population of the country. Their loyalty to the British connection is indeed writ large in Indo-British history. An inalienable British connection is fundamental to their policy, for they realize that their autonomy and freedom to develop according to their own traditions depend on the protection of the paramount power. It is impossible to exaggerate the strength which the British connection receives from the Princes, and fortunately this factor has found increasing realization within recent times.

The big landholders and zamindars have not the economic interests of big business or

the political bond and traditional loyalty of the Princes, but, being a conservative body nervous for their large vested interests and afraid of the growing power of democracy; they also will look to the British connection for safety and protection against violent methods. That is also a factor to be remembered.

But besides all these, to my mind the most powerful factor binding Britain to India would be the political consciousness of the middle classes, who realize how impracticable is any other policy and how desirable it is to secure British co-operation and good will in their programme of social and political reconstruction. That the moderate party in India will be staunch supporters of such a connection will perhaps be accepted, but to me it seems even more obvious, though it may sound paradoxical, that its strongest supporters would come from the more extreme Nationalists. And the reasons are not far to seek. Apart from its persistent efforts to wrest more power from the British, Congress and the nationalist view which it represents, stands for progressive action in regard to

social reform, agrarian policy, and industrial development. Is it not obvious that for the success of these schemes Britain's goodwill is essential?

The only opponents to this policy of conciliation, friendship and imperial co-operation are the terrorists, revolutionaries and Communists—until now a small and negligible fraction of the educated classes. With political power in Indian hands their appeal to the imagination of youth will be greatly weakened, and in any case the danger from them either to the future Indian Government or to the British connection is indeed very small.

Now we are in a position to answer the question: What are the possible effects of the adoption of the policy I have indicated on India, on England and on the world? To India it would mean the opportunity, which she has not so far enjoyed, of a national democratic government with the certainty of external peace and internal stability. These two factors are of the utmost importance to any government intent on a programme of all-round development. Her external peace



would be guaranteed by England and her internal stability is unshakably based on a strong district administration, a moderately equitable revenue system, and a powerful Civil Service. Few countries in the world have these advantages, and India is thus placed in a unique position of safety to undertake the vast schemes which her sons so ardently desire

The field for social reconstruction is vast and Great Britain has provided us with the necessary equipment for it. The humane principles of modern social theory have become part of India's inheritance, and a century of experience in British legal principles and methods have provided us with the standards of social reform. The enfranchisement of women and the depressed classes has opened the way for a genuine effort to reconstruct society. A machinery for wise legislation and a judiciary trained to impartial administration of law are the other elements of importance which the reforms place in our hands. Of course even the most perfect machinery can be of no use unless there is the urge for reform and the desire to

progress *Ex hypothesi* they exist: otherwise there is no justification for the surrender of power by Britain. The British connection provides us with the most advantageous circumstances in which to embark on our policy of national reform

Nor are the prospects of economic development, less alluring. With the co-operation of British capital and with the help of British technical skill, it is now open to us to develop India industrially to the utmost of her capacity. With India's resources and manpower and with a national policy to direct them, there is no reason why the economic life of India should not be placed on a modern basis within a reasonable period of time. Indian agriculture requires modernization to enable it to feed her population. Her road, rail and water transport require greater development for the exploitation of her resources. Above all, cheap electric power is needed to enable her to start on a scheme of intensive industrialization. Thus alone can prosperity come to the masses of India. For this policy three things are necessary: a national government which will plan the

development according to Indian needs, sufficiency of capital and the necessary technical skill. It has been the grievance of Indians that the Government of India was unfitted for this task, in view of its subordination to British economic interests. A national government's main task would be to plan the reorganization of India's economic life, but such a plan to be successful requires the co-operation of British capital and the supply of British technical skill. The British connection offers both and this fact alone should make India realize the vast possibilities open to her under the scheme of co-operation that I have indicated.

A third and perhaps more important benefit for India is the prospect of developing in her ancient land a new and more broad based civilization combining the ideas, ethics and social culture of the West with her own institutions. A modernization of society based on industrialism will inevitably produce a social revolution which will destroy the caste-society of the Hindus and infuse into Islamic social life also new ideas and conceptions. Once the neutrality of the govern

ment towards Indian culture disappears, the forces which are now knocking at the door of Hindu society will penetrate the community with a rapidity and power which will astonish all. One has only to think of the extraordinary awakening of the depressed classes during the the last ten years to understand what vital changes will be forced on Hinduism by the exercise of political and legislative power by a democratically controlled government. The economic freedom of the depressed classes which industrialism would bring, and their social rights which political power would establish, would really mean a new and more humane civilization in India based on principles other than those embodied in caste and Varnashrama Dharma, and that indeed is an object worth striving for

In the same way the enfranchisement of women and their participation in the legislatures will inevitably produce changes in the social structure, the effect of which on Hindu and Moslem society no one can foresee. But one thing is certain. In the new order of society which will arise, the customs and traditions which enforce early marriages,

prevent widows from re-marrying, keep women in purdah and restrict the scope of their activities, will have vanished

The opportunity of a revival in the fine arts on the basis of European influence I have already alluded to. Without the intimate co-operation with Europe which the British connection ensures, any revival of artistic life is likely to be narrow, exclusive and without the expression of wide human feeling, since its inspiration will be from purely local sources. Indian art, literature, music, architecture and craftsmanship have the possibility of deriving and assimilating new and vital forces by constant and un-interrupted contact with Britain. It is not a prospect which we can overlook.

Lastly there is the prestige and position of India in the world at large. As an equal member of the British Commonwealth, her voice would count in the world to a degree that an independent India could not hope for, for many decades. Though a member of the League of Nations, and a member of the Committee of the International Labour Office, her voice, because of her acknow-

reached political subordination, does not count for much to-day. But once her equality with the other British Dominions is established, would not her international position be such as would give her an effective voice at least in matters with which she is directly concerned?

For England also Indo-British co-operation offers unique advantages. It gives her a steady and reserved market on which to build her economic life. A large economic unit like India, with an expanding market and inexhaustible raw materials, becomes in these days of economic nationalism and high tariff walls a sheet-anchor for the ship of England's economic life. No doubt India will have her own tariff, but Imperial Preference is now an acknowledged principle of Indian policy. A steady and a stable market is something definite to build on, especially as the strength of economic nationalism and the increasing competition for trade between industrial countries are affecting Britain's monopoly in many trades.

Politically, Britain's strength as a world power will be greatly increased by such a

policy As I have said before, it is a foolish and short sighted view which many English men take that a self governing India would mean a weakened British Empire On the other hand nothing can be clearer than the fact that India's self government depends entirely on Britain's strength as a world power and on her capacity to maintain herself against any combination of powers A self governing India would have the greatest possible interest in maintaining the naval, military and economic power of Britain, and nothing is more certain than the prophecy that I venture to make that the imperial power of Britain will have no greater strength than the resources, man power and goodwill of a self governing India

For the world in general Indo-British co-operation has also a special value It will provide the basis of a rival world-order to Communism by providing an area for a reconstructed capitalism based on free markets, individual enterprise and economic planning founded on the interests of the national state The challenge of a Communist order of society based on State-controlled

production and distribution, eliminating waste, unemployment and money power, can only be met by a progressive capitalism based on a wide economic unit and adopting principles of individual initiative and national planning Indo-British co-operation provides a unique opportunity for thus combating Communism on its own ground

With such wonderful opportunities for both England and India would it not be a crime against human society if the present occasion for coming to a permanent agreement were lost or neglected? The real danger to both countries lies in a policy of drift. If through internal political conditions England cannot carry out her policy towards India, or if India through a sense of wounded self-respect or pique holds back at the last minute, the danger to both is great. What men of foresight, goodwill and statesmanship have to endeavour in your country and in mine is to carry out the programme of co-operation with courage and without faltering. I pray that this may happen.



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